

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 2 have been cancelled from the application. New claims 3 and 4 have been added. New claim 3 is in independent form.

First, claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement as the claims contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Specifically, the specification does not provide support for two molding stations as set forth in the claims. In response, Applicant has cancelled claims 1 and 2 rendering the rejection moot.

Second, claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the term "moulding station" in claim 1 is indefinite because the specification provide no guidance to the meaning of the term. Again, in response, Applicant has cancelled claims 1 and 2 rendering the rejection moot.

Finally, claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kleefeldt (US 5,505,506) in view of Schneegans (EP 940241).

The Examiner contends that Kleefeldt discloses a method for fabricating a supporting assembly for a lock of a motor vehicle, the lock including a plurality of mobile members (13, 16) hinged to corresponding pins (12, 15) and the supporting assembly including a shell (5) made of a plastic material which defines a housing for at least one part of the mobile members of the lock, and at least one metal element (2, 14) which supports at least a part of the pins. The method including the steps of co-molding the shell made of plastic material on the metal element. The Examiner admits that Kleefeldt fails disclose co-molding a seal gasket on an edge of the shell made of plastic material in the same molding station in which the co-molding the shell on the metal element is performed. However, the Examiner suggests that Scheegans discloses a method for fabricating a supporting assembly for a lock of a motor vehicle in which a

seal gasket on an edge of the base member made of plastic material is co-molded in the same molding station in which the co-molding the shell on the metal element is performed. The Examiner contends that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the method of Kleefeldt with the seal of Schneegans.

With respect to claim 2, the Examiner contends that Kleefeldt also discloses an actuating assembly and the method including the step of inserting a pin of the actuating assembly in the die in which the shell is molded such that the pin remains unglobed in the shell.

Applicant respectfully disagrees and traverses this rejection.

More specifically, in response, Applicant has added new claims 3 and 4 which more clearly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. New independent claim 3 sets forth: A method for fabricating a supporting assembly for a lock and actuating assembly of a motor vehicle, the lock comprising a plurality of mobile members hinged to corresponding lock pins, the actuating assembly having a plurality of actuating members hinged to an actuating pin for operating the lock, and the supporting assembly comprising a shell made of plastic material defining a housing for at least one of the mobile members of the lock and a first metal plate supporting the lock pins; the method comprising the steps of: placing the first metal plate into a mold die; inserting the actuating pin into the mold die separate and spaced from the first metal plate; molding the shell to the first metal plate in the mold die and around the actuating pin to englobe the actuating pin in the shell; and simultaneously forming a seal gasket around the peripheral edge of the shell while molding the shell in the mold die.

And, new claim 4 sets forth the steps of removing the first metal plate and co-molded shell from the mold die, assembling the mobile members to the lock pins and the actuating members to the actuating pin housed within the shell, and placing a second metal plate against the seal gasket to close the housing formed by the shell between the first and second metal plates.

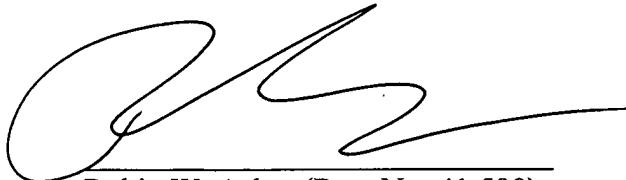
Neither Kleefeldt nor Schneegans disclose a method which includes inserting an actuating pin for hingedly supporting the actuating assembly into the die separate and spaced from the metal plate and then molding the plastic shell to the metal plate and around the actuating pin to englobe the pin in the shell.

Rather, Kleefeldt discloses that the actuating pin 12 for the actuating assembly 13 is formed by a tab 12' that is bent up from the metal plate and then surrounded by the plastic material (see col. 3, lines 7-20). Kleefeldt clearly does not disclose or teach inserting a separate pin into the die spaced from and independent of the metal plate and molding the shell around the pin for supporting the actuating assembly.

Therefore, it is respectfully request that the rejections to claim 1-2 be withdrawn and claims 3 and 4 be allowed. It is respectfully submitted that this patent application is in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment or the patent application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee associated with this Communication to Deposit Account No. 50-1759. A duplicate of this form is attached.

Respectfully submitted,



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